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Linda McCulloch
Superintendent

February 1, 2007

Dear Friends:

Celebrating Literacy for All, the theme for the 2007 February I Love to Read Month activities, will whisk you into the cultures, countries, stories and books that make our multifaceted planet so fascinating. Reading is the key to learning about different customs and traditions. Using books and folktales, you and your students can join friends and family in discovering the many cultures and stories and honor the rich heritage that makes up your community.

Celebrating Literacy for All captures topics and themes that can be integrated into disciplinary units that span all grade levels and areas of interest. The many cultures and folktales make our world come alive for students through the sights and stories that books offer. Books can take us to every corner of Montana and the globe, from the icy igloos of northern Alaska to the turquoise waters of Tahiti or the pristine peaks of Switzerland!

Join with us in celebrating February as "I Love to Read Month" and February 14 as "I Love to Read Day" in Montana. I encourage you and your staff to plan activities that promote reading for enjoyment, as well as reading for information. Surrounding students with a rich variety of literature, with experiences that make a story come alive and draw the student into a book can create the beginning of a genuine love of reading.

I've included a calendar of suggested activities to help your school celebrate February I Love to Read Month. Please make copies of the materials for your staff and students. You might plan a day or week in which all content areas are integrated with reading, writing and language activities.

Please share with us some of the ways in which you celebrate reading. Your comments on the "I Love to Read" activities will be appreciated. For further information contact June Atkins, Literacy Specialist, by telephone at (406) 444-3664 or by e-mail at jatkins@mt.gov.

This information may be found at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/AmReads/index.html>. In the future the Web site may be our only way to share the February I Love To Read Month activities.

A special thank you to the MEA-MFT and the Montana State Reading Council (MSRC) for contributing to the printing and postage for the February I Love to Read Month materials.

Happy reading,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda McCulloch".

Linda McCulloch
State Superintendent






"It is the mission of the Office of Public Instruction to improve teaching and learning through communication, collaboration, advocacy, and accountability to those we serve."

Celebrating Literacy for All

Suggested activities for **February 2007 I LOVE TO READ MONTH** and throughout the year.

- Mount a large map of the world. Mark places you will be "visiting" or "visited" in your books, stories and folktales.
- Line the walls with international flags or hang them from the ceiling.
- Make paper flags for display.
- Write to foreign embassies. Many include posters and maps in their free mailings. These make wonderful items for bulletin boards or displays and they're free.
- "All Children Smile in the Same Language" bulletin board. Ask students to bring a picture of themselves and post them on the bulletin board.
- Make life-size children from many cultures. Trace outlines of students' bodies on butcher paper. Students illustrate their outline by drawing, painting or coloring on costumes from the different cultures. Cut out and display on the walls.
- Hang international items such as piñata, fish kites, dragon kites, paper lanterns, etc.
- Make a giant totem pole. Use ice cream containers, oatmeal boxes, coffee cans or other large round containers as components. Ask students to help design faces.
- Come Over To My House, Dr. Seuss, (Random 1966), have silhouettes of homes from different countries which could be enlarged for bulletin boards or murals.
- Have students dress up as folktale characters.
- Develop a storytelling corner. Do your storytelling around the fire, as they would in the villages. Build the fire by using logs, colored tissue and a flashlight.
- Learn about special celebrations and customs from different cultures.
- Make up a story about a fabled land. Make a map to go with the story.
- Act out a native folktale. Select the tale, work up the script, choose characters and act out. Videotape the performance or perform it live for other classes.
- Write Your Own Folktale contest. Make up contest rules, such as how long the original folktales should be, whether they should be "why" tales or trickster stories, etc. Use the ten or so best stories as an ending program. Have the writers tell or read their stories. You could also have the stories illustrated and printed in booklet form. Maybe around the village fire which would add a festive atmosphere?
- Astronomy and Astrology. Learn some legends about the sky. Explanations about the appearance of stars, planets, and other celestial objects often reflect what was important to the people who invented their names and stories. Have students make up stories to explain what is visible in the night sky.
- Consider setting up a pen pal exchange. One way for children to "join hands" with others around the world is to find a pen pal in another country.
- Learn a folk dance.
- My Name. Learn what your first name means. Our names are an important part of our identity. In many cultures children are given names that will hopefully shape their identities. For example, Linda is "pretty" in Spanish; the Scottish name Donald means "world leader."

February – I Love to Read Month – 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p><i>Celebrating Literacy for All!</i> <i>Everyone Smiles in the Same Language</i></p>				<p>1 Read-a-thon Set an expected goal of hours of reading. Provide awards for students who reach the goal.</p>	<p>2 Groundhog Day Read a story about the origins of this day.</p> 	<p>3 Newspaper Day Share something you have read about a culture in the newspaper with your family.</p>
<p>4 Have Fun With Your Family</p>  <p>Read together.</p>	<p>5 International Bulletin Board Mount a map of the world on a bulletin board or wall.</p>	<p>6 Decorate A Door Decorate a door to represent a book or story from different cultures.</p>	<p>7 Book Busters Reading Club Start a reading discussion group that meets before or after school.</p>	<p>8 Endless Chain of Reading Provide strips of paper for students to write the title of their author's name. Hang the chains in a prominent place.</p>	<p>9 Go Global Use newspapers to go global. Conduct a scavenger hunt for country names or compare how stories are covered in different parts of the world.</p>	<p>10 Special Reading Day Make a special reading area at home just to use for reading during the month of February.</p>
<p>11 Read Aloud to someone special.</p>	<p>12 Reader's Theater Turn stories into theatre readers' scripts. Perform for other classes.</p>	<p>13 Sock it to Me With a Good Book Day Wear crazy socks. Make a silly sock bookmark.</p>	<p>14 Heart Reading How is Valentine's Day or cupid described in other cultures?</p>	<p>15 Carry a Book Day! Everyone carries a book in a pocket, under the arm, or in a book bag.</p>	<p>16 Feast your Eyes on a Good Book Share a favorite book or story about another culture.</p>	<p>17 Exercise Your Right to Read!</p> 
<p>18 Write a Letter Today</p> 	<p>19 Presidents Which presidents were born in February? Read about presidents. Make a president's hat. Example: Lincoln's stovepipe hat.</p>	<p>20 Alphabets Around the World Match different alphabets (Chinese, Cyrillic, Arabic, etc.) to countries.</p>	<p>21 Riddles Around the World Copy riddles from around the world. Cut apart and put on a fish bowl. Let students pick a riddle out of the bowl and read it.</p>	<p>22 ABC Books Students make ABC books with words from different cultures. Share the books.</p>	<p>23 Cultural Fair Invite students, parents, or guests who have lived in other parts of the world to read a story or talk about their heritage.</p>	<p>24 Play a game with your family such as Scrabble, Pictionary, or Trivial Pursuit.</p>
<p>25 Books Day Go to your local library to get new books. READ!</p>	<p>26 Folktales Read and compare folktales from different countries.</p>	<p>27 Multi-Culture Food Fest Each student shares a story or poem from different cultures that uses food as a theme.</p>	<p>28 Literacy for All Celebration Hold an assembly, open house, or book fair to celebrate literacy around the world.</p>	<p>Dr. Seuss Birthday March 2 Plan a Dr. Seuss big birthday bash! www.catinthehat.com www.nea.org/readacross www.reading.org</p>		<p>For additional information contact:</p> <p>June Atkins Literacy Specialist (406) 444-3664 Fax (406) 444-1373 jatkings@mt.gov</p>